Reviewer’s report

Title: Validating surgical procedure codes for inflammatory bowel disease in the Swedish National Patient Register

Version: 0 Date: 12 Jul 2019

Reviewer: William Hogan

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript reports the validity of procedure codes in Swedish National Patient Register for surgical procedures related to inflammatory bowel disease. The results are novel and important. The authors found that these procedures codes have excellent sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value, and negative predictive value for the surgical procedures they represent. Because the system of procedure codes changed in 1997, the authors also measured the sensitivity and specificity of the codes prior to 1997 and after 1997, which was an important subanalysis that I was pleased to see.

The work reported does have a few limitations that are appropriately acknowledged and discussed by the authors. None of these limitations affect the suitability of the manuscript for publication. Although only a single author reviewed charts to establish the gold standard, this author did consult a surgeon in the case of ambiguities that made it hard to discern presence vs. absence of a particular surgical procedure.

It is not entirely clear what a "transfer error" is.

Do the authors have any idea why sensitivity prior to 1997 is somewhat lower than sensitivity after 1997?

Lastly, it would be useful to know if there are systematic and significant differences in the population of patients for which requested charts were received vs. those patients for which requested charts were not received. For example, if it were the case that every patient for whom the authors did not receive a requested chart had a surgery for IBD, that could affect the sensitivity and specificity results.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?  
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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